

Message Text

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 01 COLOMB 01505 031208Z
ACTION DLOS-09

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 IO-13 ISO-00 OES-07 EB-08 L-03
CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 PA-01 ICA-11 SP-02
/075 W

-----085003 040251Z /65

R 031100Z APR 78
FM AMEMBASSY COLOMBO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9963
INFO USUN NEW YORK 807
USMISSION GENEVA

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE COLOMBO 1505

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PLOS, CE
SUBJECT: SRI LANKA PRESS COVERAGE OF LAW OF THE SEA CONFERENCE AND
PROBLEMS

REF: STATE 070173

1. ENGLISH LANGUAGE NEWSPAPERS HAVE CARRIED SEVERAL ARTICLES
ON LOS CONFERENCE. ONE DATELINED GENEVA UNDER "HEADLESS
CRISIS STALKS THE SEA TALKS" BRIEFLY TRACED AMERASINGHE
PROBLEM AND EFFORTS TO REACH A SOLUTION. ANOTHER GAVE
MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS (MFA) VIEWS ON AMERASINGHE
QUESTION. MFA TOLD PRESS XYAT B.J. FERNANDO AN ACCEPTABLE
AND ABLE UN REPRESENTATIVE WITH DIRECT ACCESS TO THE
PRESIDENT. THERE IS NO QUESTION OF ANY OTHER PERSON REPRESENTING
SRI LANKA IN UN OR ANY OF ITS AGENCIES, INCLUDING
LOS CONFERENCE. MFA SOURCE REPORTEDLY REFERRED TO ATTEMPTS
TO PRESSURE GOVERNMENT TO AGREE TO AMERASINGHE CONTINUING
TO PRESIDE OVER LOS CONFERENCE BUT THAT GOVERNMENT WAS NOT
PREPARED TO GIVE IN TO SUCH MOVES. ALTHOUGH NO COUNTRY
HAS MADE OFFICIAL REQUESTS FOR AMERASINGHE CONTINUING IN
PERSONAL CAPACITY, GOVERNMENT HAS INDICATED IT HAS NO
LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 02 COLOMB 01505 031208Z

OBJECTION TO THIS.

2. IN A LENGTHY, THOUGHTFUL ARTICLE, EDITOR OF ENGLISH
LANGUAGE WEEKEND OF APRIL 2 PLACES ONUS ON UN BUREAUCRACY
FOR LOS CONFERENCE BEING WITHOUT A PRESIDENT. CITING
DIPLOMATIC CIRCLES HERE, EDITOR WRITES THAT UN SECRETARIAT
OBVIOUSLY RESPONSIBLE FOR INITIAL FAUX PAS BY ADVISING

GSL ON POSSIBILITY OF AMERASINGHE PRESIDING IN PERSONAL CAPACITY AND OVERLOOKING POSSIBLE LATIN AMERICAN REACTION. TO MAKE MATTERS WORSE, HE GOES ON, UN SECRETARIAT APPROACHED GSL THROUGH THIRD PARTY DIPLOMATIC CHANNELS RATHER THAN DIRECTLY, AND GSL RIGHTFULLY ACTED WITH RESERVATION.

3. WEEKEND EDITOR RAISES SEVERAL QUESTIONS: (1) WHY DID UN BUREAUCRATS DELAY THEIR OVERTURES WHEN THEY REALIZED THERE WAS VERY LITTLE TIME FOR GENEVA SESSION? (2) WAS THERE ANY SUPER POWER OR ANY OTHER INTERESTED PARTY THAT WANTED SESSIONS DELAYED OR DEADLOCKED? AND (3) IF THERE IS LEGAL PROVISION FOR AMERASINGHE PRESIDENCY IN PERSONAL CAPACITY, WHY SHOULD LATIN AMERICANS OBJECT?

4. WEEKEND EDITORIAL MENTIONS SEVERAL CRUCIAL LOS ISSUES BUT DOES NOT PROPOSE SOLUTIONS. IT ENDS UP ON A GLOOMY NOTE, SAYING THAT IF CONFERENCE GETS UNDER WAY, IT WILL PROBABLY END UP IN A STALEMATE BECAUSE THERE ARE OBVIOUS SIGNALS ABOUT ANOTHER WAVE OF POLEMICAL STRUGGLE BETWEEN THIRD WORLD DELEGATES AND THOSE OF THE SUPER POWERS. IN LIGHT OF ALL DEVELOPMENTS, CHANCES ARE THAT CURRENT SESSION WOULD END WITHOUT MUCH PROGRESS BUT WITH MUCH RHETORIC AND MONEY-SPENDING.

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 03 COLOMB 01505 031208Z

5. EDITOR NOTES THAT SRI LANKA AND OTHERS HAVE ALREADY CLAIMED SOVEREIGNTY OVER HISTORIC WATERS, TERRITORIAL SEAS, AND ISLANDS AND HAVE CLAIMED EXCLUSIVE JURISDICTION OVER CONTINENTAL SHELF AND NAVIGATIONAL RIGHTS. REFLECTING HIS JAUNDICED VIEW ON OUTCOME OF LOS CONFERENCE, EDITOR SAYS THERE IS NOT MUCH TIME FOR THIRD WORLD AND SRI LANKA SHOULD NOT WAIT FOR INTERNATIONAL CONVENTIONS THAT TAKE AGES TO MATERIALIZE.

6. COMMENT. THESE ARTICLES ADDED NOTHING TO OUR KNOWLEDGE OF THE SUBJECT. IN BLAMING THE UN SECRETARIAT, SUPERS, LATIN AMERICANS, ETC. FOR AMERASINGHE IMPASSE, PRESS HAS SCRUPULOUSLY AVOIDED NOTING POSSIBILITY THAT COLOMBO COULD SOLVE PROBLEM BY ATTACHING AMERASINGHE TO GOVERNMENT OF SRI LANKA (GSL) DELEGATION. LEVIN

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PRESS COMMENTS, LAW OF THE SEA, MEETINGS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 03 apr 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978COLOMB01505
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780144-0509
Format: TEL
From: COLOMBO
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t197804100/aaaadhjv.tel
Line Count: 110
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 1d4fb2a5-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION DLOS
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 78 STATE 70173
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 05 may 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: N/A
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2818475
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: SRI LANKA PRESS COVERAGE OF LAW OF THE SEA CONFERENCE AND PROBLEMS
TAGS: PLOS, SOPN, CE, LOS
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odhc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/1d4fb2a5-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014